

Bringing the Mission to the Classroom:

Developing an Educational Philosophy Statement for Living Stones Academy

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Project description

This past year at Living Stones Academy we developed an **Educational Philosophy Statement (EPS)**. Nine years ago Living Stones was founded to make a Christ-centered education accessible to more students and families. In time we began to summarize that mission by saying LSA is “**unwaveringly Christ-centered, academically rigorous, and radically inclusive.**” The mission has been clear, but how we integrate it into the classroom has lacked coordination and clarity. To deepen our mission integration and to bring greater cohesiveness and focus to our approach to education, we spent the past year developing an Educational Philosophy Statement. The formal process began in August 2017 and included significant input from our staff, education committee, board, as well as a few respected educators from outside our community. The following statement was approved at our March 2018 board meeting.

The Final Product: Living Stones’ Educational Philosophy Statement

Living Stones Academy is a **Christ-centered** school committed to the City. Rooted in a loving God revealed in the Living Word and creation, we seek to help our students learn to love the things that God loves.

Knowing all this, education at Living Stones Academy is:

- **Boldly Transformative**... equipping students to bravely participate in the restoration of God's world by teaching them radical hospitality, justice seeking, and community building.
- **Rich Through Diversity**... understanding that learning is enhanced and deepened through the participation of a diverse group of learners and engagement with a diverse group of texts.
- **Inclusive** ... recognizing the inherent dignity and God-given potential of each and every student.
- **Integrated**... weaving learning across disciplines and through grades.
- **Built Around Creativity and Wonder**... inspiring student curiosity and engaging students in mind, body, and spirit.
- **Rigorous**... built upon high expectations in order to help each student develop strong character and to foster a critical understanding of the world.

Where do we go from here?

Over the past nine months we have accomplished a great deal, but there is still challenging work that lies ahead of us. Next we must evaluate how well our current curriculum and pedagogy aligns with what we approved in March. The good news is that this new EPS was shaped in significant ways by some of our current strengths as a school. Over the next year I will be working with our education committee and an educational consultant to coordinate the implementation of our new statement.